

# Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC)

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT)

## March 4 2008 TORNADOES

### SITUATION REPORT # 9

17 March 2008, 1400 Hours

*New information is in BOLD ITALICS.*

#### SUMMARY

In the early evening hours of March 4 a cold front moving across the Commonwealth generated storm activity. These storms produced rain, wind and reported tornadoes. National Weather Service Morristown confirmed that an EF1 Tornado did touch down in Big Stone Gap, Wise County Virginia. Preliminary damage reports have been received from several jurisdictions and state agencies. No injuries or deaths were reported.

#### EXECUTIVE ACTION

**EOC Activation:** The Virginia VEOC is at Recovery Operations with limited staffing.

**State of Emergency:** Governor Kaine declared a State of Emergency at 1119 hours 5 March 2008.

**Federal Declaration:** No declaration has been requested at this time.

**Protective Actions:** Local Emergency Declared by:  
Wise County at 1800 hours 4 March 2008  
Town of Big Stone Gap at 1700 hours 4 March 2008  
Essex County at 0800 hours 5 March 2008

#### WEATHER

**Forecast:** **Monday 17 March:** Partly sunny, with a high near 60; South winds between 5 and 10 mph. **Monday night:** Partly cloudy, with a low around 42. South winds around 10 mph. **Tuesday 18 March:** Partly sunny, with a high near 65; South winds between 10 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph. **Tuesday night:** A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms after 2am; Mostly cloudy, with a low around 51; Breezy, with a south wind between 10 and 20 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph.

#### OPERATIONS SECTION

**ESF 5 – Emergency Management:** Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)  
Event created in WebEOC “2008-03 Tornadoes 03-04-08”. VDEM and localities posting event related information and resource requests in WebEOC. VDEM is monitoring recovery operations. ***The VEOC conducted a conference call on 17 March at 1130 Hours with the Town of Big Stone Gap, Wise County, VDOT and VDEM Officials to update current response activities and facilitate recovery efforts.***

**Local Liaison:** VDEM Region 4 Coordinator returned to the Town of Big Stone Gap on 14 March to assist local officials in recovery efforts and enhance situational awareness and remains available to assist if needed.

#### INFRASTRUCTURE BRANCH

**ESF 1 – Transportation:** Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)  
Agency responded to request on 4 March for signage from Wise County. The VDOT providing 2 front end loaders, transportation, chainsaws and safety equipment to support Department of Correction personnel in debris removal in Big Stone Gap. VDOT signs were demobilized on 10 March. ***VDOT crews continue to assist with***

**debris removal in the Bullet Park area and along the Powell River. Current VDOT resources on site in the Town of Big Stone Gap will demobilize at the close of business (COB) 17 March.**

## **LOGISTICS SECTION**

**ESF 7 – Resource Support:** Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

3 requests for assistance were cancelled. 4 requests have been completed. 4 requests are currently in progress. **All State resources will demobilize at the COB 17 March.**

Virginia Department of Corrections (VDOC)

Providing 2 – 10 inmate work crews to assist in debris removal in the Town of Big Stone Gap. **VDOC resources will demobilize on 17 March at the close of business (COB)**

**ESF 17 – Volunteers and Donations:**

Virginia Volunteers Active in Disasters (VA-VOAD)

VA-VOAD representatives are on scene 14 March evaluating resource needs for the Town of Big Stone Gap. **VA Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Officials will meet with Big Stone Gap Officials 17 March to initiate an action plan to assist in continued recovery efforts. Students from a local college may assist in the debris removal.**

## **PLANNING SECTION**

**Situation Unit:** Preparing daily Situation Reports, monitoring WebEOC entries and maintaining situational awareness. **Next Situation Report will be issued Monday, 24 March 2008 at 1400 hours.**

**ESF 14 – Recovery:** VDEM staff is in contact with Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap officials to facilitate individual (IDA) and public (IPA) damage assessments.

## **LOCAL ACTIVITIES**

**Wise County:** Reports 6 houses destroyed, 15 with major damage, 25 with moderate or lesser damage. EOC is open and local emergency declared. Wise EOC has been in contact with VDEM PA personnel. Local Social Services contacted to begin setting up meetings to assist residents in need. Initial damage assessment received from Wise County on 13 March. Wise County EOC is operational from 8am until 5pm with limited staffing effective 14 March. The Town of Big Stone Gap incident command post (ICP) has relocated to the local police station effective 14 March. **Wise County reported over 100 truck loads of debris has been removed from the impacted area and relocated to a local quarry. This debris will be either burned or taken to a county land fill for permanent disposal.**

**Essex County:** 9 residences were damaged, 7 moderate, 1 major and 1 most likely destroyed. Essex Vol. Fire Dept. had roof damage of \$30,000 and Essex High School had \$50,000 damage to roof and bleachers. Two businesses, South Tech (\$10,000) and Tappahannock Vet Hospital (\$10,000) sustained damage.

**Westmoreland County:** Reports 3 agricultural barns destroyed, 2 agricultural barns with damage and 1 fire station damaged but still operational.

**Goochland County** Two businesses were damaged. Total damage estimates are less than \$100,000.

**Louisa County** Damage to 4 structures was reported with one destroyed. Damage assessment is being conducted. No State resources have been requested.

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